



Public Works

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August 18, 2025

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Client Services and Permissions Branch (Policy and Program Development Section)
135 St. Clair Avenue West, Floor 1
Toronto, ON M4V 1P5

Re: Streamlining environmental permissions for the electricity sector (ERO 025-0600)

Peel Region appreciates the opportunity to comment on this proposal. Peel Region staff comments are included below.

PEEL REGION STAFF COMMENTS

Recognition of the Clean Water Act Objectives

The proposed streamlined process outlined in ERO 025-0600 for electricity sector projects appropriately recognizes the statutory objectives of the Clean Water Act. The proposal as drafted maintains necessary restrictions and integrates safeguards by not allowing proponents to self-register stormwater management works in vulnerable areas where such activities are considered significant drinking water threats and are explicitly prohibited by policies contained in the local source protection plan. This critical component of the regulatory proposal should be maintained.

Technical Assessment Requirements

The requirement for a site-specific technical assessment performed by a licensed engineering practitioner is a positive inclusion. The proposal states that the assessment must evaluate whether the proposed works are a significant drinking water threat, identify the applicable source protection area, relevant drinking water sources, wellhead protection areas and intake protection zones, associated vulnerability scores, and measures to manage any potential risks to drinking water. To strengthen this component, it is recommended that the ministry require:

- peer review of the technical assessment by a qualified third-party consultant,
- mandatory engagement with key stakeholders, including the local source protection authority and municipality prior to self-registration,
- notification and circulation of any technical supporting documents to the municipality for review and comment.

Transition Provision and Regulatory Alignment

The proposal does not address how it will align with upcoming amendments to O. Reg. 287/07 under the Clean Water Act, which take effect on September 1, 2025.

Clarification is needed on:

- whether transitional provisions will be introduced;
- how the ministry will ensure continuity and consistency in the ongoing protection of drinking water sources;
- the ministry's role as implementing body in the local source protection plans to ensure compliance with applicable existing prescribed instrument policies and any future revisions to local source protection plans that may be necessary to align with a registration-first approach.



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Enforcement and Oversight under the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry (EASR) Framework

The proposal lacks details on how the ministry will ensure ongoing protection of drinking water sources and how the ministry will enforce its mandate under the EASR framework. To ensure robust oversight, the ministry should:

- define clear inspection, monitoring, operating, and notification terms and conditions for registered activities;
- establish and implement communication protocols and associated directives for ongoing effective compliance, including well-publicized guidelines, technical documents, best practices, audits and corrective action plans;
- support increased inspections for registered works in vulnerable areas based on potential risks.

The proposed changes should not compromise the integrity of the source protection planning framework. If this proposal is implemented, enhanced review mechanisms, stakeholder engagement, ongoing evaluation of effectiveness, and regulatory clarity will be key to ensuring that requirements and commitments are met.

CONCLUSION

Peel Region asks that the Ministry consider the comments provided herein to inform its decisions on the approach to streamlining environmental permissions for the electricity sector. Should the proposal advance, Peel Region looks forward to participating in the consultation on the draft regulation.

If you have any questions or require more information, please contact Therese Estephan, Advisor – Source Water Protection at therese.estephan@peelregion.ca.

Kind Regards,

Signed by:

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